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A N

E P I S T L E

O N

P R E F E R M E N T,

I N S C R I B E D T O

The Rev. Dr. *SWIFT*, D. S. P. D.

Found among the Papers of a great Author

*Qui pelago credit magno, se fœnore tollat,
Qui pugnâs & castra petit, præcingitur auro,
Vilis adulator picto jacet ebrîus ostro,
Vel qui sollicitat nuptas, ad præmia peccat,
Sola pruinosis horret facundia pannis,
Atque inopi lingua disertus invocat artes.*

Petron.

L O N D O N:

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E P I S T L E

O N

P R E F E R M E N T.

“**R**UN, Run, the Levee opens,” cry the Slaves,
Who read Preferment in the Grin of Knaves;
“His Lordship dresses in his Audience Room;
“My trusty Friend, his Valet, bid me come.”

A Lacquey beckons, all perceive the Nod, 5

And press with Morning Incense to their God :

The thread-bare Priest, the famish'd Pamphleteer,

The broken Merchant, and the spend-thrift Heir ;

Of heterogenous Kinds, but blended there,

Bend to their Lord, and buzz about his Ear. 10

B

One

One pushes forward with a wild Grimace,
 And leers, as conscious of his own Disgrace ;
 Trusts to his Lordship, hopes he'll make him Friends,
 And on a Promise to his Wife depends.

" Your Wife, Sir !---what is Mrs *Pert* your Wife ? 15

" A most ingenious Lady ! on my Life !

" A handsome Woman never sues in vain :

" I'll do it, Sir.---But send your Wife again."

Another comes, " My Lord, you have forgot---

" A Jail will find me, I must surely rot : 20

" Consider but the Terrors of a Jail,

" Without one Farthing to procure a Meal :

" The Sums, you know, which I disburs'd to you,

" Had softned Debts, and wou'd maintain me too ;

" For God's-fake---Here his Lordship cuts him short, 25

" You're angry, Sir ; and you have Reason for't.

" But Things were huddled up at such a rate !

" The Place was granted, and I spoke too late :

" They saw indeed, that I was greatly vext,

" And pawn'd their Honour, you should have the next.' 30



A third

A third with Satisfaction in his Look,
 " Here is the Pamphlet ;---as the last one took,
 " This will take better ; for the Scheme---and Style,
 " Must be of Service."---Here my Lord should smile,
 Return him Thanks on Thanks, and swear the Work 35
 Might melt a *Jew*, or profelyte a Turk ;
 And when the Man is certain of a Place,
 Turn on his Heel, and hear some other Case.

The pious Chaplain, orthodox in Dress,
 Whose Wig is ample, but his Paunch the less ; 40
 Thrusts through the Crowd---my Lord perceives his haste,
 " Well, Doctor, the good Man is dead at last :
 " Heav'n for the Rev'rend Dean at length has call'd,
 " A thousand Pound you're in his Place install'd ;"
 Here the poor Levite may be dipt in Debt, 45
 And win the Living, if he lose the Bett.

A Female Favourite once this Method us'd
 To one, who from meer Ignorance refus'd.
 A Mitre fell, the Dutchess for him sent,
 Propos'd the Bett,---he knew not what she meant : 50

Good natur'd Men will say he mis'd his Part,
 Through primitive Simplicity of Heart,
 But we who know him since, and know how dull,
 Acquit his Heart,---the Fault was in his Skull.

Such are the Men, that haunt the great Man's door, 55
 Fed on such Fare, no wonder then they're poor.
 Unhappy Creatures! ever doom'd to toil,
 Yet reap no Harvest from the barren Soil:
 Like Men bewilder'd, while false Lights in view,
 Stand as they stand, but fly when they pursue: 60
 Or Chymists, on their golden Dreams intent,
 Who waken not, till all they have is spent.

More Fool, and more Ridiculous than these,
 Is he, who from his Merit hopes to please,
 Who thinks that Honesty, or Wit, or Parts, 65
 The Depth of Judgment, or the Stretch of Arts;
 Will recommend a Man to those, who know,
 Themselves the Foes of Worth, and Worth their Foe.

To blind the Multitude, a Knave in pow'r,
 With Men of Merit toys away an Hour, 70

But

But in his Clofet fees the Knave alone,
 Nor joins with those, whose Lives upbraid his own.
 He gives them Pelf, who thank him for his Peif,
 And picks his Mates, to tally to himself;
 Corruption binds them fast, and links the Chain, 75
 Flows from the first, and runs along the Train.

But, DOCTOR, let us fairly state the Case,
 Were you in Pow'r, pray, whom would you embrace?
 Whom should your Slaves officiously admit?
 The Man of Merit, and the Man of Wit? 80
 Such ever at your Heart, and at your Ear,
 Wou'd all your Counfels, all your Profits share.
 And pray what Statesman, now so much in Vogue,
 Acts not like you, tho' cherishing a Rogue?
 Since both but manifest a meer Self-love, 85
 And what they are, by what they cherish, prove.

But why are honest Men, and Men of Wit,
 Unfit for Pow'r, while Knaves and Fools are fit?
 ---Presumptive Wits unluckily retain
 An itch of *Plotting* and a *medling* Brain. 90

Some Dregs of Virtue, or some Sense of Shame,
 To mingle with the *Plot*, and sow'r the Scheme;
 While Blockheads boggle not at Shame or Sin,
 But without question, plunge through Thick and Thin.
 Deep is the dirty Lake, that they run through, 95
 Laborious are the Talks they have to do;
 One *Blockhead* in the Bus'ness of *Chicane*,
 Effects what twenty Wits attempt in vain;
 State Creatures must be,---between Knaves and Fools:
 No Horse will bear the Loading of such Mules. 100

Suppose a Courtier at some deadly Pinch,
 A Knave will offer, aukward Virtue flinch;
 " *Macer*, I want you," *Macer* overjoy'd,
 Cares not what dirty Deed, so he's employ'd;
 But try another; ' Sir, your known Address 105
 ' Bids me to trust you, and to hope Success;
 " What from my Virtue, from my Honour swerve!"
 ' Go dine on Virtue, or with Honour starve.

Where white-rob'd Innocence directs the Helm,
 The Good will shine, and circle round the Realm, 110
 And

† And from their Centre, *Walpole*, flow around,
 For Sense and Parts, and Probity renown'd;
 But for a Knave to raise an honest Man,
 Is more than *Bufo* did, or *Appius* can.

And he who looks for this, as well may look, 115
 For Flocks of Pidgeons, headed by a Rook.

Then let Primiers imagine what they will,
 Their Hearts are alien from the brave Man still;
 They court his Cause, affect to make him known,
 To damp his Interest, and advance their own: 120
 And in whatever Form they seem to show,
 Like Chiefs disguis'd, 'tis to inspect a Foe;
 Like the fam'd Beast, that mimicks Human cries,
 Who hears her follows, and who follows dies.

Ay, this is Patriotism! hence we must seek, 125
 Why Cow'rds are valiant, and the Valiant meek;
 Opinion pliant, Prejudice deprest,
 Learning heard out, and Wit a welcome Guest;
 Vanity

† Whoever was the Author of this Poem, (the Copy of which was sent to the Publisher, in a Hand not unlike that of a very great Author) this Passage and other Circumstances shew that it was written many Years ago. And indeed by an Erasure, another Name seems to have been Originally written.

Vanity filent, Pride a fawning Slave,
 The Miser bounteous, and the Atheist grave; 130
 Statesmen forgiving, Courtiers without Spleen,
 Each King so gracious, and so learn'd each Queen.

Merit, 'tis true, shall sometimes soar on high,
 The mark of Wonder to each Gazer's Eye;
 But those who raise it, raise it for their Ends, 135
 To silence Faction grumbling at their Friends.
 To flight it, wou'd reflect an odious Stain;
 A *Burrhus* triumphs in a *Nero's* Reign.
 Yet far from Favour, certain of a Turn,
 The Man is spurn'd, whene'er 'tis safe to spurn. 140

Some can by tacit Virtue keep their Seats,
 Such, as the Statesman neither loves, nor hates;
 But, while innoxious, suffers them to grow,
 Like useless Plants, for nothing else but Shew.
Crispus is honest, and wou'd rather see 145
 The Monarch bounded, and the People free:
 But while he mourns the Subject, fears the King,
 A lukewarm Patriot is an odious Thing.

Loving

Loving the Poor, but fearful of the Rich,
Nor Sea nor Land,---but a most filthy Slitch. 150

But who the Favours of a Prince procure?
---The fav'rite Minister, and fav'rite Whore ;---
Such catch his Smiles, and, intercepting Day,
Stand between Virtue and the warming Ray.
Embodied close they stand, Rank after a Rank, 155
Whose Fobs are empty, and whose Looks are lank ;
Proud of a Rascal's kindred, fure to run,
And crowd, and warm them at the royal Sun :
While honest Souls in fullen Mood retire,
And shiver at a Distance from the Fire. 160

Thus while the Huntsman's Feed runs short at home,
A Pack of Hounds in search of Carrion roam ;
Find some dead Carcass, yelp around the Prey,
And snarl his Dog, who own'd the Flesh, away.

A Prince's Bounty, sacred at the Source, 165
Flows pure and clean, but muddies in its Course ;
This is my Simile,---while you, more bold,
Peevish from Age, in Politicks grown old,

Term it a Puddle, choak'd with Mud and Stink,
 Where the Goose waddles, and where Affes drink ; 170
 Which, when it flows, flows to a common Shoar,
 Adds Dirt to Dirt, and taints Things clean before,

Such Heads as yours, where larger Notions roll,
 Big with high Thoughts, and all replete with Soul,
 May be, indeed, above such abject Things, 175
 Fill'd with a true Comtempt of Courts and Kings:
 But I, to mimick what I must admire,
 The Patriot's Virtue, and the Poet's Fire,
 May strut in Thought, and spirit up my Self,
 Deriding Title, and despising Pelf ; 180
 Yet it must vex a Man, and pique his Pride,
 To see such Creatures lifted by the Tide ;
 A Tide of Fortune, where they sail secure,
 Steer'd by some Knave, or wafted by some Whore.

Decent Reflection, for the Brave and Wise ! 185
 Who aim at Merit, and deserve to rise ;
 That without Gold, and many a supple Cringe,
 To Woman, Lewdness, Pride, and Paint, and Fringe,
 Their

Their Efforts fail them, they must quit the Scene,
Retire in Silence, or resent in vain. 190

And yet, through Force of Whim, a Female Heart
May deviate from the Wrong, and help Desert;
The brave Man, sometimes wins a Strumpet's Grace,
Slips into Pow'r, and steals into a Place.
Thus rose the *Blenheim* Chief, and, by these Springs, 195
Soar'd to a Prince, the Chastisement of Kings.
E'en from a Woman all his Grandeur rose,
Sent into Arms to save a * King's Repose;
That Voice, all Melody to win the Fair,
Yet talk'd to *Europe* in the *Van* of War: 200
That graceful Form, so fitted to Fatigue
In Womens Bus'ness, or a Court Intrigue;
Yet pour'd his Lightning on the tow'ring *Gaul*,
Unplum'd his Pride, and taught his Hopes to fall.

But with Male Favourites, there's no such Chance, 205
Jealous of Worth, they deaden its Advance;
And sedulous expell them from the Throne,
Whose Int'rest is not blended with their own.

Precarious

* K. Charles the 2d was jealous of the Duke of M---l---b.

Precarious State, on vile Foundations built,
 Threatning a Fall, and prop'd by mutual Guilt; 210
 Never full finish'd, ever in Decay,
 Before 'tis roof'd, the Bottom slips away.

But let us trace this Evil to its Source,
 It falls upon the Prince with double Force;
 Who chose the Minister, and durst not trust 215
 An upright Servant, daring to be just;
 But rais'd a Sycophant, to keep him blind,
 And lull him in his Lethargy of Mind.

Each Scribler now, each Schoolboy, can declaim
 On upstart Knaves, and damn them in his Theme; 220
 And when the King dispenses with the Law,
 The Minister is blam'd for each *faux pas*.
 Thus some Men can deduce each sinful Trick,
 Not from the wicked Actor, but *Old Nick*;
 But pray, because the De'il has no good Name, 225
 Is he when our own Vices prompt, to blame?
 The Statesman's blam'd, when Princes manage ill,
 Without his Knowledge, nay against his Will;

And

And wou'd be punish'd, if he dar'd to speak,
Expose their Folly, or condemn their Freak. 230

Lewis, the Bully, as the Story's told,
Thus serv'd a Confessor, who was too bold;
It seems, the Monarch had so flagrant been,
His Mifs grew impudent, and nos'd the Queen.
The good old Priest such Evils to retrench, 235
Talk'd much of Hell, and storm'd against the Wench:
Nor storm'd unpunish'd, for he found, too late,
His Care dispens'd with, and the Monarch's Hate;
Who next intrufts his Soul with * one who knew
The Cure of Souls, yet had good Manners too. 240

No Man will envy, who considers right,
But pity Greatness, and its dang'rous Height;
The Want of Friends; the Multitude of Foes;
The Length of Labour; and the no Repose;
The Dread of Masters; Treachery of Slaves; 245
The Cuts of brave Men, and the Stabs of Knaves;

E

The

* Father *Le Chaise*.

The Nation's Hate ; the Rival's nice Address ;
 Perpetual Hazards ; frequent ill Success ;
 Th' Inconstancy of Kings ; the Want of Peace ;
 The Stings of Conscience ; and the sure Disgrace.

No Man, but who to Sense of Shame is lost,
 Will think some Places worth the Pains they cost ;
Cornus has an Employment, *Cornus* knows,
 How, by whom, and for what Ends, he rose :
 And spends its Income on the Wife and Brood ; 255
 For he, who gave it, is their Flesh and Blood.
 My Lord his Features in the Children spies,
 One has his Lips, another has his Eyes ;
 And *Cornus* is supported but to feed
 My Lord's stale Strumpet, and his spurious Breed. 260

Fumo had Land, but *Fumo* figh'd to shine,
 Appear at Court, and with the Courtiers dine :
 Hastes to be ruin'd, and impatient fees
 The Sale of Manors, and the Fall of Trees.

Who

His Woods dispos'd of, and his Acres fold, 265

He hies to Court, ***** has his Gold;

And what has he? At first a little Pow'r,

Then late Remorse, and many an aking Hour.

Who then, like *Fumo*, would desire to roam,

And starve abroad, while Plenty was at Home? 270

The World thought *Myron* blest with Wit and Fire,

But *Myron* itch'd to make the World a Lyar;

Revolted to the Court, and cring'd, and fawn'd,

And all his Genius for a Pension pawn'd.

Observe the Raptures which he since has writ, 275

All loyal Strains, but guiltless all of Wit;

And what true Poet envies *Miron's* Part,

Who won the Court's, but lost the Muse's Heart?

Rare is the Poet, most excessive rare,

Who choaks not with the Grossness of Court-air; 280

But, if we must have Patrons and Champagne,

T'illume our Genius, and exalt our Vein,

Let

Let them have Grandeur without haughty Airs,
And set our Worth equivalent to theirs.

A Poet's Sense, and not his Fortune, rate, 285

But think *Parnassian* Fields no small Estate ;

No overweening Lords, no selfish Friends,

Debauching Wit to mercenary Ends ;

But such as you without a Blush might know,

Might grace your Page, or in *Pope's* Numbers flow. 290

Can'st thou recall, before thy Worth was crown'd,

Before thy *Harley* smil'd, or Envy frown'd ?

Can'st thou, old Man, recall what thou hast been,

And patient bear the Prattle of Eighteen ?

Yes, sev'nty Years in vain have spent their Rage, 295

Still thou art *Swift*, in Spight of Pains, or Age ;

Faithful, the Muses to the last attend,

And the warm Writer with the † Man must end.

But

† As the Dean has been some Years incapable of Writing, this was an unhappy Prophecy of the Author : But this Paragraph points out the Time, when the Poem was written, to be, when his Reverence was seventy Years old, and before his Decay ; and when the Writer of it was eighteen ; we suppose therefore, that it was put into the Hands of a great Author for his Revival.

But Something of a higher Nature gives
 The Strength you feel, and in your Bosom lives ; 300
 A Life which all shou'd eagerly perfue,
 A Life of Action, and of Virtue too.
 A kind Concern, if not to break her Chains,
 To help your Country, and to ease her Pains ;
 'Tis this, 'tis this, that lengthens out thy Goal, 305
 Warms thy old Heart, and lightens up thy Soul.---

F I N I S.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

*THE Author is well appriz'd, that some People may
 object to the foregoing Epistle, the Unseasonableness of
 the Time in which it is written, there being no such Enor-
 mities in any Part of Europe, as are complain'd of in it ;
 but to answer this Objection, the courteous Reader may
 suppose 'twas written fifty Years ago.*

o
o

But something of a light is thrown
The strength of your love, and your
A line which all should see
A line of action, and of vision
A kind of courage, it is not to be
To help your Country, and to save the
'Tis this, 'tis this, that is the
Wishes thy old heart



A D V E R T I S E M E N T
THE Author is well acquainted with the
object to the foregoing paper, the
the time in which it is written, and
mines in any part of Europe, and
but to express the Author's own
opinion, and to show the